

The claims defining the invention are as follows:

1. A method of providing a user with information using the Internet, whereby  
5 the method includes:

a user accessing an organization's web-site, via a user terminal, and activating an icon located on the organization's web-site;

activation of the icon resulting in the user being placed in communication with a database server;

10 presenting data fields to the user via the database server and allowing the user to select data fields of their choice, the user selections being communicated to the database server;

database searching software locating information, in a database associated with the database server, based on the user selected data fields communicated to 15 the database server; and

transmitting the located information to the user;

whereby, the located information is transmitted to the user in the form of an electronic business card or the like.

20 2. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, all communications to and from the user occur using the Internet.

3. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the user is provided with means to transmit user selected data fields relating to user personal information 25 to the organization.

4. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the database contains more readily accessible data relating to the organization than is presented to a user on the organization's web-site.

30 5. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the information transmitted to the user is at least one electronic business card of an owner, employee, consultant or other person associated with the organization.

6. The method as claimed in claim 5 wherein, the electronic business card is compatible with standard computerised address books and may be copied to standard computerised address books, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), or  
5 mobile phones.

7. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the information on the database pertains to the organization's personnel contact information.

10 8. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the database stores information relating to users who have activated the icon on the organization's web-site.

9. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, advertising may be attached to the information presented to the user.

15 10. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the selectable data fields include at least one option directed to departments, products, goods, services, personnel, geographic location or the like.

20 11. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the information transmitted to the user is via e-mail, Short Message Service (SMS), or Wireless Application Protocol (WAP).

25 12. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the user terminal is a computer, PC, notebook, laptop, handheld, PDA, mobile phone, or similar electronic device.

30 13. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, a new organization may be electronically stored in the database by the new organization completing and electronically transmitting a registration form or the like to a database provider.

14. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, advertising attachments to the information transmitted to the user are paid for in a separate subscription cost.

15. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, personal particulars of a user including their name, e-mail address, location and the like are stored in the database.

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16. The method as claimed in claim 15 wherein, the particulars of a user or group of users are transmitted electronically to the organization, or any of the other organizations in the database.

10 17. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the information on the database is linked to more than one web-site.

15 18. The method as claimed claim 16 wherein, the particulars of a user transmitted to the organization is presented to the organization in the form of an electronic business card or the like.

19. A method of providing a user with information in relation to goods or services offered by various organizations, the information being communicated to the user using the Internet, whereby the method includes:

20 a database provider maintaining a database;  
organizations electronically indicating interest in receiving sales leads to the database provider and information relating to the organization thereafter being recorded in the database;

25 a user electronically transmitting a request, via a user terminal, to the database provider relating to goods or services for which they have an interest in receiving further details and special offers on, via the Internet;

30 information filtering software categorising the user request;  
if the categorised user request relates to an organization's goods or services the user is sent at least one electronic business card or the like from the database provider on behalf of the organization.

20. The method as claimed in claim 19 wherein, the database provider can provide the organization with marketing information relating to user requests.

21. The method as claimed in claim 19 wherein, particulars of a user including name, e-mail address, location and the like are stored in the database.

5 22. The method as claimed in claim 19 wherein, the user request is transmitted via the Internet, e-mail, SMS, WAP or other electronic means.

23. The method as claimed in claim 19 wherein, a fee is charged to the organization for transmitting an electronic business card to users.

10 24. A system of providing a user with information; the information in relation to an organization, using the Internet, whereby the system includes:  
an organization's web-site provided with an icon;  
a user terminal, the user terminal providing means for a user to connect to  
15 the organization's web-site;  
a database;  
means to allow the user to activate the icon located on the organization's web-site, the user being placed in communication with a database server, associated with the database, after activation of the icon;

20 means to present data fields to the user and allow the user to select data fields of their choice;  
database searching software to locate information within the database based on the user selected data fields; and  
means to transmit the information to the user in the form of at least one  
25 electronic business card or the like.

25. The system as claimed in claim 24 wherein, all communications to and from the user occur using the Internet.

30 26. The system as claimed in claim 24 wherein, the user is provided with means to transmit user selected data fields relating to user personal information to the organization.

27. The system as claimed in claim 24 wherein, the information transmitted to the user is at least one electronic business card of an owner, employee, consultant or other person associated with the organization.

5 28. The system as claimed in claim 24 wherein, the electronic business card is compatible with standard computerised address books and may be copied to standard computerised address books, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), or mobile phones.

10 29. The system as claimed in claim 24 wherein, the database stores information relating to users who have activated the icon on the organization's web-site.

15 30. The system as claimed in claim 24 wherein, advertising may be attached to the electronic business card presented to the user.

31. The system as claimed in claim 24 wherein, the selectable data fields include at least one option directed to departments, products, goods, services, personnel, geographic location or the like.

20 32. The system as claimed in claim 24 wherein, the information transmitted to the user is via e-mail, Short Message Service (SMS), or Wireless Application Protocol (WAP).

25 33. The system as claimed in claim 24 wherein, the user terminal is a computer, PC, notebook, laptop, handheld, PDA, mobile phone, or similar electronic device.

30 34. A system of providing a user with information in relation to goods or services offered by various organizations, the information being communicated to the user using the Internet, whereby the system includes the components:  
a database provider which maintains a database;

means for an organization to electronically indicate their interest in receiving sales leads to the database provider and information relating to the organization thereafter being recorded in the database;

5      a user terminal to facilitate a user electronically transmitting a request to the database provider, the request relating to goods or services for which the user has an interest in receiving further details and special offers on;

10     information filtering software for categorising the user request; whereby, if the categorised user request relates to the organization's goods or services the user is sent at least one electronic business card or the like from the database provider on behalf of the organization.

35.    The system as claimed in claim 34 wherein, the database provider can provide the organization with marketing information relating to user requests.

15    36.   The system as claimed in claim 34 wherein, the user request is transmitted via the Internet, e-mail, SMS, WAP or other electronic means.

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